

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 04740 300615Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 4740

1. BISHOP CHI HAK-SUN CELEBRATED ON JUNE 29 TENTH ANNIVERSARY AS HEAD OF WONJU DIOCESE AND ACCESSION TO EPISCOPATE. CELEBRATION IN WONJU WAS ATTENDED BY GOVERNOR OF KANGWON PROVINCE, CARDINAL, NUNCIO, FELLOW BISHOPS, AND LOCAL DIGNITARIES. WHOLE TOWN WAS FESTIVELY BEDECKED AND BOY SCOUTS WERE OUT IN FORCE TO DIRECT TRAFFIC AND GUIDE PARTICIPANTS TO OUTDOOR CELEBRATION. WITHOUT GOING INTO RECENT PROBLEMS OF CHURCH-STATE CONFLICT GOVERNOR PRAISED BISHOP FOR MANY GOOD WORKS "TOO NUMEROUS TO BE RECOUNTED". AND APPEALED FOR MAINTENANCE OF VIGOROUS ANTI-COMMUNIST SPIRIT. CARDINAL FOLLOWED, COMMENDING BISHOP CHI'S STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRAISING HIS COURAGE, AND SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE. NUNCIO WAS SOMEWHAT MORE RESTRAINED IN PRAISE AND REFERRED TO BISHOP'S SPECIAL APPROACH TO QUESTIONS OF FAITH.

2. IN MEANTIME, AMERICAN CATHOLIC FATHER HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT FATHER YI KI-CHONG, WHO HAD BEEN HELD BY KCIA UNDER SUSPICION OF BEING INVOLVED WITH CATHOLIC STUDENT "PLOT" AT SEOUL NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HAS BEEN PERMITTED TO LEAVE FOR ROME TO AVOID INVOLVING CATHOLIC PRIEST IN SOON-EXPECTED TRIAL OF SNU STUDENTS LEADERS. ARRANGEMENT WAS REPORTEDLY NEGOTIATED BY ARCHBISHOP YUN KONG-HUI AND NUNCIO AT REQUEST OF CARDINAL WHO GREATLY CONCERNED

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 04740 300615Z

OVER THREAT OF INVOLVING CATHOLIC PRIESTS IN NEW ROUND

OF POLITICAL TRIALS.

3. BISHOP RENE DUPONT, WHO RECENTLY RESUMED
CAPLAINCY OF YOUNG CHRISTIAN WORKERS FROM
BISHOP CHI, TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE AND THREE OTHER
BISHOPS SAW PRIME MINISTER KIM CHONG-PIL DURING
FINAL WEEK OF JUNE. PRIMIN TOLD THEM THAT ROKG
DID NOT WANT CONFLICT WITH CHURCH, BUT WAS PREPARED
TO TAKE "ANY STEPS NECESSARY" TO SILENCE PROTEST
BY ANY CHURCH GROUPS. HE OFFERED TO MEET ANY
TIME WITH ANY BISHOP OVER ISSUES OF "CONCERN TO THE
CHURCH." BISHOPS DISTURBED BY DIRECTNESS OF PRIMIN'S
COMMENT AND CONCERNED THAT TRIAL OF CATHOLIC
POET KIM CHI-HA AND STUDENTS MAY BE USED TO TARNISH
IMPORTANT SEGMENT OF CHURCH AND CATHOLIC SOCIAL ACTION AS
SUBVERSIVE. NETHERTHELESS, BISHOPS DUPONT SAID, THE CARDINAL
WAS WILLING TO TRY MAINTAINING A DIALOGUE WITH PRIMIN.
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